138 **FOXE** (John) A brief exhortation, fruitfull and meete to be read, in this heauy tyme of Gods visitation, not only in Londō, but in all other places, to suche as be Sicke, where the Ministers do lacke, or otherwise cannot be present to comfort them. I. Foxe. Black Letter. 8°. Imprinted at London, by Ihon Day, dwelling ouer Aldersgate beneath Saint Martines. Cum priuelegio. N.D. (? ab. 1560).

Collation : A^8.

VERY RARE. Cp. Herbert 677, where a different edition is described. Excepting Herbert, I can find no mention of this book in bibliographies or other books of reference.

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A brief exhor=

tation, fruitfull and meete to be read, in this heauy tyme of Gods visitation, not only in Londō, but in all other places, to suche as be Sicke, where the Ministers do lacke, or otherwise cannot be present to comfort them.

I. Foxe.

O Lorde our God let thy wrathful displeasure be turned away from vs, euen for thy sonne Iesus Christes sake.

Imprinted at London, by Iohn Day, dwelling ouer Aldersgate beneath Saint Martines.

¶ *Cum priuilegio.*

¶ An exhortation vnto the Sicke.

ALthoughe I doubte not, but he, that hath layd this crosse vpon you, doth also minister to you sufficient strength and patience to beare the same: & that you like a good souldiour forget not the voyce of your captayne, whiche sayeth, that in pacience you must possesse your soule: yet notwithstanding for as much as flesshe is weake, & that it is our duety whiche be here about you, one of vs to exhorte an other so long as we continue together, I thought it my parte to moue and desire you, for the Lordes sake, to take it quietly what soeuer the lord shal sẽd, whether it be life or death. yf lyfe, not to thinke your selfe more happy therby: nor yet vnhappy though death do come. For happy (sayeth the scripture) yea & blessed be they that dye in the Lord, And Saint Paule counteth it aduauntage for him to departe hence, desiryng to be dissolued and to be with Christe. So you lykewise let not your flesshe shrinke at the remembraunce of death, but reioice rather, & with a chri-

stian courage take vp your crosse, fo-
lowing your captaine Christ the cõque-
rour of death which went the same way
before you. And thoughe ye can not fol-
lowe him in like innocencye of life, yet
take the benefites of his death and em-
brace his promises boldly, which promi
seth to all that beleue in hym, neuer to
dye, but to haue euerlastyng lyfe. For
therfore died he, to take away both the
sting and feare of death, and to destroye
him whiche hath the Imperie of death,
that is the deuill. Hauing therfore these
so plentiful promises of the scripture, let
vs not shrinke. And though the nature
of flesche is cõmonly to shrinke at death,
yet thys nature is to be suppressed (as
much as may) by the power of gods spi-
rit, & by the meditation of his holy pro
mises: folowing (as I said) the ensaum-
ple of the holy Apostles, who whether
they lined or died, their deth was to thẽ
a lucre, their life was to them nothinge
but Christ: So let vs thincke in our sel-
ues likewise, that whether we lyue or
dy, Christs we are, & euer shalbe, which
neuer dieth, but liueth alwayes: And so
shall they whiche liue to him.

Thus then haning and hearing now
the gospel & the promises therof so long
time

tyme preached vnto you, learne nowe therfore to practise that, whiche you haue heard. And as you know the grace of God in Christ his sonne to be greate and cõfortable, so now labour to applye the same & to exercise it vpon your selfe: wherby lyke a good scholer nowe you may declare by your doyng, what you haue learned by hearing.

And thus being armed with the power and strẽgth of Christ, passe thorow this storme, be it neuer so rough and sharpe to the flesh, hauing before your eyes so many examples of good mẽ which passed the same way before you as the Prophetes, Apostles, & Martyrs of Christ, who in their extremities passed through greater tormentes, some racked, some torne in pieces, some sawen a sonder, some stoned to death, some hanged by one mẽber, some by an other, some broyled vpon coales, some burned with flamyng fire: whiche they notwithstãding abid with pacience. But especially casting vp your minde and beholding the death of Christ, learne therby to dye and not to feare death, nor to murmure agaynst God. For if he did abyde a smarting passion, and that in his middle and best age: thincke your selfe not better

Not to feare death.

than he. And if his death be a remedy to our woundes, and victory agaynst our death, (as in dede it is,) then enioy you your victory, geuing thankes to Christ therfore. Thirdly if he beyng innocent yet was cõtent to dye and so died as neuer anye dyed in the like case, but he alone: Then compare with his innocency your manifolde deseruings, and sufer willingly that, whiche you haue deserued wilfully, consideryng with your selfe, that whether nowe or hereafter it shall please god to call you hence, you are not alone. How many are gone before you? How many shall go with you when soeuer you shall depart? and how many shall follow after? And that of all ages and of all sortes of men. For what is the estate and condition of al men but mere mortalitie? That is to saye, not so soone borne to this worlde as dead to god. And what doth it skill then when a dead man dieth, whiche is dead already before he begynneth to dye, whether he dye sooner or later? as all men be which be borne of Adam. For where Christe sayeth in the gospell, let the dead goe burye the dead: what meaneth he, but that we shoulde vnderstande therby no difference to be betwene them that be

Death conquered.

dead,

dead, and thē that be a liue, as touchyng god. wherfore I exhort you (deare brother) let not thys death any thyng dismay you, whiche is but bodyly, and not to be regarded: But rather consider and weighe the true death in dede, which is the separatiō of man from god his creator. And this death as it is horrible, so it is to be feared in deede, as witnesseth the gospell, saying: Feare not hym that onely can kil the body, but feare ye him, whiche both can kill the body, and cast the soule into hell fire. But Christe be praised who hath takē this death cleane, awaye frō you. As for the bodyly death, seing it is a separation not from the fauour of god, but onely from the fruition of this present worlde, it hath nothing greatly to be feared, but rather to be embraced with thankes, at the lest with obedience, when soeuer the hande of the Lord doth send it. For if it be true that Saint Jhon saieth, he that loueth god perfectlye can not loue thys worlde: so true it is agayne, that he whiche hateth this world truly, can not greatly feare death. wherfore consider thys bodyly death as it is, to be (as I sayd) a separation of man from this world onely, and not from his god. For nether is he any

What is death.

thyng nearer vnto god that is aliue: neither he any thyng farther of, whiche is dead, but rather nearer than the other, witnessyng the holy Apostle: while we be in this body (saith he) we are straungers from god.

Death Gods punishmēt for sinne.

Although it can not be denied, but as all other punyshment is greuous, so death inflicted of god for sinne, cannot be pleasaunt to the nature of man: neither yet contrary ought to be passed so little vpon, as many desperate ruffins be wont to do, whiche for light trifles aduenture theyr liues, neither stickyng at synne, nor fearynge the due punishment of god for the same: yet seyng the same god agayne of his owne most tender mercy hath prouided a remedy for this our deserued death, thorow ỹ innocent death of his sonne our sauiour, let vs therfore not so muche be terrefied by ỹ one, as cōforted by the other. Briefly to conclude, and though these promises were not so amplye and so certenlye set forth in scripture to vs, as they be, or if I should now haue to do with some prophane gentle, or philosopher, knowing nothing but bare naturall reason. what would he saye vnto me thus reasonyng with him: As if I should aske him being a man

Death not vtterly nor desperatiue to be contemned.

a mā stricken in age, and neare to death, if he myght begin from hys first youth, his yong yeares againe, to abide all the troubles, perils, plunges, cares, and sorowes, which he vnto that day had suffered, whether, thinke ye, he would take the offer of lyfe, with that condition or no? Certes I suppose not. And why thē should life seeme so swete, which a man would refuse to haue, though he might, drawing suche rages, and cares with it as it doth in al estates. Moreouer to reason what may be said in this matter further, I praye you what doth a man lose by death? ye wil say peraduēture it doth depriue a man of this lyfe: But first let vs see what life is. For if true life be to liue in the fauour of god, certayne it is, that of this life no bodyly death can depriue vs, through Iesus christ our lord. Agayn if it take from vs this lyfe of the body: So also doeth it take from vs the feare of death, and all pangues of sickenesse, so that we shall neuer nede to be sicke, nor to feare death any more. Moreouer, ye will say, it doth depriue vs of this beautiful light of the pleasaunt firmament: So it deliuereth vs also from night and darkenes of the earth. It taketh vs away frō ỹ flourishyng spring,

What is lyfe.

The incommodities & cōmodities of death cōpared together.

and pleasaũt sommer: So also it taketh vs away from the sharpe winter and al bitter stormes: it taketh a man from hys frendes and kinsfolkes: So also it doth from all his enemies and slaundering tongues: yt plucketh you frõ wife & childrẽ: Adde also, from all the griefes and sorowes that happen by wyfe and childzen, in seyng those euils, whiche many tymes happen vnto them, And though it pluck you from wife and childzen, yet it bringeth you to your father and mother, and to all your brethzen in the Lord, which are gone before, where ye also shall receaue your wife and childzen again. It taketh away your eating and drinkyng: So it doth your hungre and thyrst. It plucketh you from your goods & possessiõs: that is to witt, from corruptible & trãsitory goods, to riches heauẽly & euerlasting: And what losse is that I besech you. Finally cõsider with your selfe, not frõ what or from whence but to what thynges, & whether it doth trãsporte you. For what doth death els, but (as a man would saye) ferry ouer a man, from the bãcke of miserie, vnto the garden of Paradise: from this world to the land of glorye, and to the kingdome of life. Of whiche kyngdome Daniell in his

The effect of death.

his vii. chapiter speaketh, whose wordes be these: Then Iudgement shall set, that all power may be takē away, and trodē down, and perish for euer, but the kingdome, and power, and maiestye of the kingdome and of all rule vnder heauen, shalbe giuen to the people of the saintes of the highest, whose kyngdome is the kyngdome euerlastyng, and all kinges shall bend and bowe to the same. which kingdome god graunt to you & to vs al through Iesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The kyngdome of Christ and of the true Christians

And thys hetherto that I haue sayd, for putting of the feare of death, may serue in like sorte to the putting away the feare of sinne. For he, which hath deliuered vs from the one, hath also deliuered vs from the other. So that one pryce payeth for both. that is the bloud of Iesus. which bloud with the same vertue, as it vanquished death, with the same also it vanquisheth sinne For what is death but the effect and the operation of sinne? or what is sinne, but the agent or cause of death. So that the cause beyng takē away, the effect must nedes folow. Likewise the effect beyng taken away, the cause hath nothing to do to all suche as be in Christ Iesus. Be strong therfore and bold (deare brother) vpon this

Synne not to be feared

your victorye agaynste both your enemies, aswell sinne, as death. To the obtayning of which victory nothing els is required of your parte, but onely to beleue in Jesus the sonne of god. As nothing els was required of the Jsraelits beyng stricken with firy serpentes, but onely with their eyes to looke vp vnto the serpent hanging vpon the tree. So, you in beleuyng onely on the sonne of god crucified for you, shall not perishe but haue euerlasting life. For your fayth onely in Christ iustifieth, and nothyng els: according to the scriptures. For yf thou beleue (saieth ỹ Apostle) with thy hart, and confesse with thy mouth, that the Lord Jesus died for thy sinnes, and rose agayn for thy righteousnesse, thou shalt be saued. Rom. x. And agayne, the righteousnes of god (saieth Paule) is by the faith of Jesus Christ, in al and vpon all that beleue. Rom. 3 Agayne, he which hath in hymselfe no good workes, but onely beleueth in him whiche iustifieth the wicked, hys fayth is reputed vnto righteousnes. Rom. 4. Agayne, for that which was impossible to the law to do, in asmuche as it was weake bicause of the flesh: that performed god, and sent hys sonne in the similitude of sinnefull flesh,

Fayth in Christ only iustifyeth & saueth.

Rom. 10.

Rom. 3.

Rom. 4.

flesh, and by sinne, damned sinne in the flesh, that the righteousnesse required of the lawe might be fulfilled in vs. Rom.8. Rom.8.
Item. Rom.4. Therfore by fayth, is the enheritaunce geuen, as after grace, that the promise might be firme & sure vnto al the sede &c. Thys faith hold you fast, and praye to god to encrease it: be it neuer so litle with a good desire to haue it more, it shall suffice vnto your saluatiō. Rom.4.
And thus as I haue exhorted you (deare brother) not to dread the violence of death (which death being in the handes of god whether ye shall lyue or dye is vncertayne vnto vs) so I exhorte you likewise not to feare any sinne, be it neuer so greate in your conscience. For in fewe wordes to end and to conclude, what sinne is it that you nede to feare, what or howe great so euer it be, seyng the first man that euer entred into Paradise, was both a notorious thiefe and a murtherer, to whome for his fayth, ye know what was sayde of the Lord Iesus: This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. A thiefe first entred into Paradise.

The same Iesus with euerlastyng glory be prayed for euer. Amen.

¶ A Prayer to be sayd ouer children, visited by Gods hand with sickenesse, in this sorowful tyme of Gods visitation.

O Merciful Lord and Sauiour Christ Jesus the onely begotten sonne of the liuyng father, redemer of al men, through all ages, whose nature is tender & pitifull not onely to the strong & stout, but also to the weake and simple, as babes, infantes and childzen, we hartely desyre and praye thy glorious maiestie for this child or infant, whiche hath not the capacitie to praye for it selfe, lying here in paynes and pangues of sorowfull sickenesse, beseechyng thy grace, that with the same pitie wherwith thou sufferedst the babes and childrē to come to thee in the Gospell, and laydst thy blessed handes vpon them, thou wilt also respect with the same eyes of compassion, and consider thys siely childe sore greued with sickenes. Graunt we beseech the that as it beareth and here sheweth the image of sinnefull Adam, by sufferinge for sinne, so it bearyng the liuely image of thy heauenly gifte, may by thy grace be deliuered and helped frō that whiche

now

now by nature it suffereth. So that like as it is with vs partaker of thy holye Baptisme, so it may also with vs be partaker of thy helpe and consolation. And forsomuche as the paynes of the same poore childe seeme greuous and vehement we beseech thee so mitigate the vehemencie thereof, that by the relieuyng of it, we also may be comforted, dealyng with it according as it shall seeme good to thy diuine wisedome, whether by death to cal it, or by life to restore it, so that whether it goe, or tary, it may be thine, and at last with thine elect be made partaker of that blessed resurrection, whē thou shalt appeare, to whose maiestie be prayse, thankes, and glory for euer and euer. Amen.

I. Fore.